BENJAMIN PERCY • CARLOS NIETO • BRYAN VALENZA

GHOST RIDER

MARVEL

18

LGY#261

When innocent blood is spilled, a ***Spirit of Vengeance*** is born, and **JOHNNY BLAZE** finds himself transformed!

Marvel Comics presents...

GHOST RIDER

"Bad Education"

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PREVIOUSLY...

Talia Warroad was a former S.H.I.E.L.D. and F.B.I. agent with an expertise in the occult and the supernatural. When she was assigned to hunt down the Ghost Rider, Warroad discovered demonic influences across the country and was forced to team up with her original target. Eventually, this led to a romantic relationship with the Rider's human host, Johnny Blaze!

Her magic and knowledge of the occult, not to mention her unflinching confidence, have made her an invaluable ally for Blaze, as they've charted the dark highways of America.

But who is Talia Warroad exactly? And what secrets has she kept from the Ghost Rider?

I'VE NEVER BEEN ABLE TO SLEEP.

WHEN I CLOSE MY EYES, THE SHADOWS INSIDE ARE AS BUSY AS THE SHADOWS OUTSIDE.

I SEE THINGS OTHERS DON'T.

3:33

SOME OF THEM CAN'T HURT YOU.

LIKE THIS THING IN THE CORNER.

IT'S MORE OF A STAIN.

I CAN WIPE IT AWAY.

THE PAST.
BOSTON.

TALIA

WHEN I WAS YOUNGER...

...I DIDN'T KNOW I HAD THAT KIND OF POWER.

SO I WAS ALWAYS SCARED.

MOMMY! DADDY!

WHEN I TOLD MY PARENTS ABOUT THE STAIN ON THE CEILING...

...THEY TOLD ME TO LOOK AGAIN.

THE STAIN WAS A BUNNY, MY MOTHER SAID, AND BUNNIES WEREN'T SCARY.

BUT I KNEW BETTER.

THINGS WEREN'T ANY BETTER DURING THE DAY.

NOT JUST BECAUSE I SAW SHADOWS EVERYWHERE, ALWAYS...

...BUT ALSO BECAUSE EVERYONE KNEW I WAS DIFFERENT, SO THEY TREATED ME DIFFERENT.

TALIA?

THIS IS THE *THIRD* TIME I'VE ASKED.

DO YOU HAVE TO GO TO THE--

--BATHROOM?

EVERY DAY, ALL DAY, I TRIED TO HOLD IT.

YOU SHOULD BE ASHAMED!

YOU'RE TOO OLD FOR THIS, TALIA!

BECAUSE I DIDN'T WANT TO GO IN *THERE.*

STUPID BRAT...

SOMETHING LIVED IN ONE OF THE STALLS.

SOMETHING ONLY I COULD SEE.

IT WASN'T A STAIN OR AN ECHO EITHER.

THIS ONE COULD *HURT.*

AAAIIIEEEE!

WHAT DID YOU DO TO YOURSELF?!

THAT NIGHT, I DIDN'T FEEL SCARED.

I FELT ANGRY.

THE RAGE TURNED OVER INSIDE ME LIKE A SNARLING DOG.

AND THE STAIN ON THE CEILING SEEMED TO HEAR ME.

IT GAVE ME THE ANSWER I WANTED.

THE NEXT DAY, MY PARENTS SAID I SHOULD STAY HOME FROM SCHOOL...

...BUT I INSISTED ON GOING.

THIS IS FOR YOU.

THANK YOU, TALIA...

ALL RIGHT, EVERYONE...

...IT'S TIME FOR OUR MATH LESSON AND-- URK!

-GASP-

EWWW!

OH...

OH NO.

WHAT DID YOU DO TO ME, YOU LITTLE @#$%?!

PRESENT DAY.

TALIA?

TALIA, ARE YOU EVEN LISTENING TO ME?

DINER

SORRY, JOHNNY.

WHAT IS IT? WHAT DO YOU SEE?

IT'S NOTHING.

I'M THINKING WE HEAD NORTH AT THE SPLIT.

SOUND GOOD?

HOLD ON A SEC...

...THIS CURVE IS DANGEROUS.

THE WEIRDER THINGS GOT WITH ME, THE MORE MY PARENTS PUSHED BACK.

BUT BY THE TIME I WAS A TEENAGER, I WAS DONE PRETENDING TO BE ANY SORT OF NORMAL.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

I WAS STILL AFRAID...

DOLL GIRL

...BUT I WAS ALSO ANGRY...

...BECAUSE I DIDN'T THINK ANYONE UNDERSTOOD ME.

UNTIL I MET *HIM*.

ATM

STEFAN SKAAR.

WOOO!

ATM

LET'S MAKE SOME MONEY.

TSSSSSS

PERFLUO.

THERE WE GO!

VRRRR

HOW DID YOU DO THAT?

DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT, GIRLIE.

ONE TIME... I DREAMED OF A SYMBOL LIKE THAT.

I WROTE IT DOWN ON A PIECE OF PAPER AND GAVE IT TO MY TEACHER, AND SHE PISSED HERSELF IN THE MIDDLE OF CLASS.

I ASKED HIM TO TEACH ME.

HE SAID IT WASN'T JUST A MATTER OF READING A BOOK OR LEARNING EQUATIONS.

BEER 30PACK

PIZZA

ONLY A FEW, RARE PEOPLE ARE PLUGGED INTO THE DARKNESS.

EVEN IF YOU'RE ONE OF THEM...

...YOU MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO MANAGE IT WITHOUT GOING CRAZY OR GETTING SICK.

PLEASE, I'M READY, I'M--

EVERYBODY GET YOUR HANDS UP.

DON'T RUN! DON'T MOVE AT ALL!

WE'RE JUST ENJOYING A LITTLE PICNIC ON THE BEACH, OFFICER.

DON'T FEED ME THAT @#$%. WE HAVE SURVEILLANCE FOOTAGE FROM THE ATM YOU HIT.

PIZZA

I'M SORRY, OFFICER, BUT I CAN'T HEAR YOU OVER THE SCREAMS.

YOUR *EYES*--THEY'RE SCREAMING...

THEY'RE SCREAMING AND FULL OF TEETH.

STEFAN...?

WHEW! WHAT WAS THAT?

WHAT IN THE LIVING HELL JUST HAPPENED?

YOU'VE GOT YOUR WHOLE FUTURE AHEAD OF YOU, KID.

YOU SHOULDN'T BE HANGING OUT WITH FREAKS LIKE THAT.

YOU HEARING ME?

PAY ME A VISIT

I COULD GET YOU TOSSED IN JUVIE FOR WHAT HAPPENED TONIGHT.

BUT YOUR PARENTS ASSURE ME THEY'RE GOING TO COME DOWN HARD ON YOU. ISN'T THAT RIGHT?

WE'RE SO SORRY AND SO EMBARRASSED ABOUT THIS.

EMBARRASSED?

YOU'RE EMBARRASSED?

WELL, YOU KNOW WHAT I AM?

I'M @#$% ANGRY!

GREENWICH VILLAGE, NEW YORK CITY.
THE SANCTUM SANCTORUM.

YOU UNDERSTAND, MR. AND MRS. WARROAD, THAT I'M VERY BUSY.

YES. OF COURSE. WE'RE VERY GRATEFUL FOR YOUR TIME...

WOULD YOU LIKE SOME TEA?

I'D RATHER DRINK RAT BLOOD.

...DOCTOR STRANGE.

I'M APPROACHED DAILY WITH EVERY VARIETY OF NONSENSE.

SOMEONE THINKS THEY'RE PSYCHIC BECAUSE THEY DREAMED OF TRAINS--

--AND THE NEXT DAY, THERE WAS A RAIL ACCIDENT IN BANGLADESH.

SOMEONE THINKS THEIR CAT IS A MALEVOLENT FORCE BECAUSE WHEN IT MEOWS, IT SOUNDS LIKE IT'S SPEAKING LATIN.

FOOMP

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IT'S ALL RATHER TIRESOME.

BUT YOUR PARENTS SAID SOMETHING THAT CAUGHT MY ATTENTION...

...SO I'M INDULGING THIS VISIT, TALIA WARROAD.

WHAT PART DID THEY TELL YOU?

THAT I HEAR VOICES IN MY HEAD? THAT I SEE DEAD THINGS EVERYWHERE? THAT I CAN DRAW DESIGNS THAT HURT PEOPLE?

OR THAT I HATE THEM? DID THEY TELL YOU I HATE THEM?

AND I DON'T WANT TO TALK TO A @#$% THERAPIST!

IS THAT WHAT YOU THINK I AM?

THEY... SAID YOU COULD HELP ME.

I ASSUMED--

YOU ASSUMED WRONG.

UKK--

TALIA!

THE @#$%?

I ASSURE YOU SHE'S SAFE.

THIS METHOD IS AGGRESSIVE BUT EFFICIENT.

HUK UK!

I'M AFRAID I DON'T HAVE THE TIME OR PATIENCE TO INTERVIEW A SULLEN TEENAGER.

FASCINATING.

TALIA!
DEAR GOD...IS SHE OKAY?
PLEASE! PLEASE TELL US YOU CAN CURE HER!
CURE HER?
THERE'S NO CURE FOR THIS SORT OF THING.
BUT I CAN TEACH HER.
@#$% OFF!

TALIA!!!

WHERE DID SHE GO?!

I...DON'T KNOW...

"...BUT I SMELL SULFUR AND BRIMSTONE."

WAS HOPING YOU'D CALL.

THINK WE MIGHT HAVE A LOT IN COMMON.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

THAT WAS THE SUMMER I TURNED 13.

THAT WAS THE MOMENT EVERYTHING CHANGED.

PRESENT DAY.

ColmeGas

GRAB ME A COFFEE, WOULD YOU?

DIESEL OR UNLEADED?

FUNNY...

Al's MART

WITH THE GAS, THAT'S $49.00 EVEN.

IT'S TIME FOR CHANGE.

WHAT DID YOU SAY?

I SAID HERE'S YOUR CHANGE.

I THOUGHT I HAD LEFT ALL THAT TROUBLE BEHIND ME.

BUT THERE'S SOMETHING *FAMILIAR* IN THE AIR, A SMELL LIKE SULFUR AND BRIMSTONE...

...AND BLOOD.

ColmeGas

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EVERYTHING OKAY?

NO.

NO, I DON'T THINK SO.

THE *CULT OF MEPHISTO* IS BACK, AND MY ROLE IN IT ISN'T FINISHED.

TO BE CONTINUED!

NEXT ISSUE

MOVE OVER, GHOST RIDER!

Talia Warroad is one of the most gifted magicians in America, but what happens when the Cult of Mephisto wants a piece of that gift? And what will they do when they find out the Ghost Rider is her partner?

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